

# BWC Strategy Session

## Session 4: Marketing to FORTUNE 500 Companies—The Sequel

*On July 13, 2005, Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> continued its 2005 Strategy Session series to provide Network members with tips and resources for marketing the Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> list to FORTUNE 500 companies in their region. Susan Bullard, Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> team member, provided opening administrative remarks and introduced the featured participants:*

- Nicole Waldman, Air Quality Planner, Houston-Galveston Area Council of Governments
- Cheryl Moeller, Senior Real Estate Agent, El Paso Corporation
- Ian Todreas, Marketing Consultant, Eastern Research Group

### Cheryl Moeller and Nicole Waldman

Ms. Moeller described her experience of applying for the Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> list in Houston, Texas. The process started when a senior executive at El Paso received an invitation letter from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which was passed on to Ms. Moeller. She reviewed the letter and visited the program's Web site at <[www.bwc.gov](http://www.bwc.gov)> for background information and completed the online "Do We Qualify" checklist. Ms. Moeller explained that El Paso already offered a \$25 bus pass subsidy to its employees. However, after learning more about the National Standard of Excellence, she decided to work with management and was able to increase the benefit to \$50 per month. In addition, she worked with Nicole Waldman to identify and implement the supporting benefits necessary to qualify for the list. Many of these benefits, such as rideshare matching and

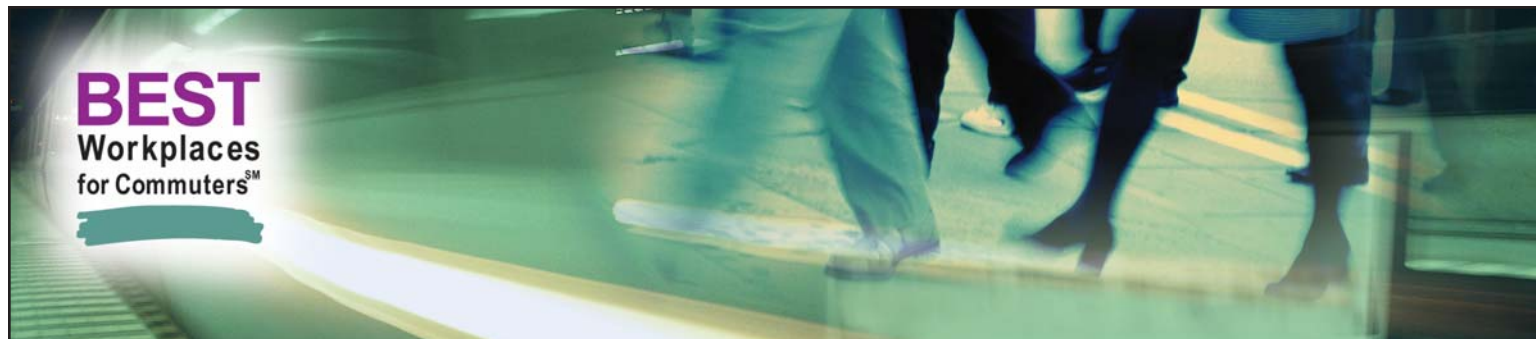
Emergency Ride Home, are available from the local Transportation Management Association.

Ms. Waldman, a Network member and local recruiter for Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup>, briefly described her experience working with El Paso. She initially spoke with another El Paso employee and was eventually connected with Ms. Moeller. Ms. Waldman provided Ms. Moeller with information on the commuter-related services available to local companies and answered questions about the Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup>.

Ms. Bullard asked Ms. Moeller what materials were the most helpful as she applied for the list. Ms. Moeller explained that the "Do We Qualify" checklist provided the necessary information. In addition, Ms. Moeller used the Internet to research other commuter-related services and then communicated these benefits to El Paso's employees.

Ms. Bullard mentioned that all the CEOs from the FORTUNE 500 companies received a letter from the EPA Administrator inviting their companies to apply for the list. She also pointed out that EPA can provide recruiters with copies of the letters. The letters serve two specific purposes. First, they inform top management of the opportunity and help secure buy-in from the top down. Secondly, the letters serve as a reason for recruiters to make follow-up calls and provide an introduction that warrants attention from a CEO's office.

Patrice Thornton from EPA asked Ms. Moeller if El Paso employees asked for the subsidy increase. Ms. Moeller explained that the subsidy, which is highly valued by employees, was the best value for the company's money. She added that while El Paso



could have increased the subsidy to \$30 to qualify for the list, they decided to increase the subsidy to \$50 to make a statement to their employees. The company was consolidating locations and management thought this would be a way to retain employees and encourage transit use. In fact, the substantial benefit tremendously increased bus ridership.

Lynn Frank from the Downtown Minneapolis Transportation Management Organization (Downtown Minneapolis TMO) asked Ms. Waldman if she completed a mail campaign as part of her recruiting plan. Ms. Waldman explained that she did during the TMO's first campaign but not during its second. She added that she relied on cold calls to local companies on various "best of" lists published by local trade journals. Ms. Waldman noted that direct contact was more effective than sending letters. Ms. Bullard added that EPA also sent letters to FORTUNE's 100 Best Places to Work and to all FORTUNE 500 Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) members.

Ed Hoey from CommuterLink explained that his team is currently making cold calls. He asked Ms. Waldman to describe the volume of calls she made during Houston's campaign. Ms. Waldman explained that she made hundreds of phone calls. She called the human resources and public relations offices and tailored her messages appropriately.

Ms. Frank briefly explained an innovative approach her organization uses to book commuter fairs at companies in the Minneapolis region—a call day. All Downtown Minneapolis TMO employees get together in a conference room once each year and make calls for an entire day. The process ensures that calls are completed and allows employees to collaborate in real time.

## Ian Todreas

Mr. Todreas serves as a recruiter in the Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> from the FORTUNE 500 companies campaign. During his presentation he discussed barriers to recruiting large, FORTUNE 500 companies and presented many tips and suggestions for overcoming them. For more information, his PowerPoint presentation is available on the Web site, <[www.bwc.gov](http://www.bwc.gov)>.

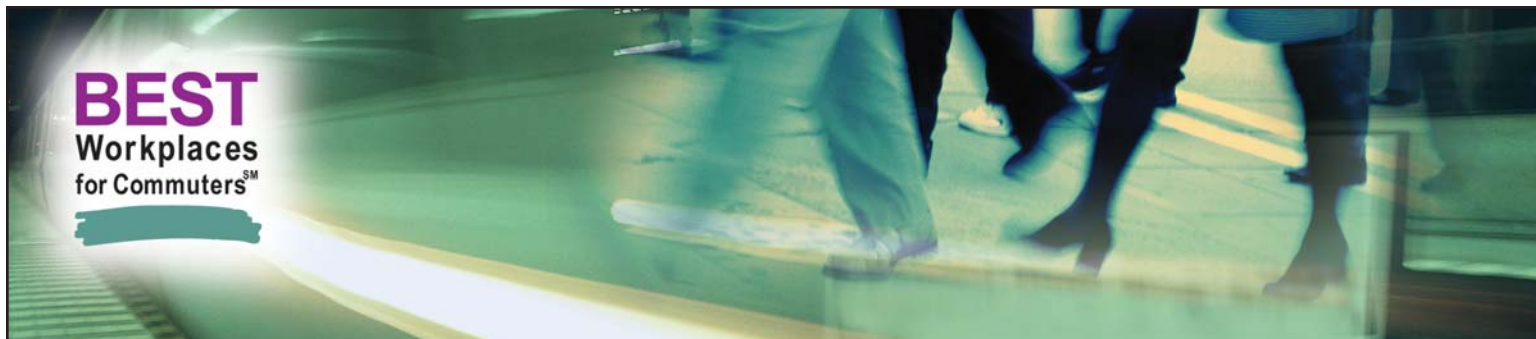
## Open Discussion

Steve Offutt from EPA explained that the Top 20 employers on the list of Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> from the FORTUNE 500 companies will be ranked by the percentage of their total U.S. workforce eligible for outstanding commuter benefits. The percentage will be calculated by dividing the number of employees working at Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup>-qualified work sites by the company's total U.S. employment.

Brooke Hoberman from Rideworks of Greater New Haven mentioned that there are no qualifying FORTUNE 500 company headquarters in her region. However, SBC, a FORTUNE 500 company, has regional work sites in Connecticut. Ms. Bullard offered to provide contact information for the SBC headquarters in San Antonio. Mr. Offutt added that there are FORTUNE 500 company work sites all across the country and that the Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> team can provide recruiters with contact information for qualifying work sites. In addition, this information is available in the FORTUNE 500 Marketing Toolkit available by mail online <[www.bwc.gov/support/index.htm](http://www.bwc.gov/support/index.htm)>.

Ms. Frank noted that cold calling can be effective and that the Downtown Minneapolis TMO tried recruiting companies by delivering flyers door-to-door to employers in the downtown area.





## Closing

Ms. Bullard closed the discussion and informed the participants that a summary of the strategy session will be available on the BWC Web site, <[www.bwc.gov](http://www.bwc.gov)>. Ms. Bullard also encouraged everyone to participate in Race to Excellence. The application deadline is August 1, 2005. In addition, she reminded participants that the ACT International Conference is September 18 to 21, 2005 in Anaheim, California, and that the Race to Excellence awards will be presented during that time.



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